

Dear Sir:

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on March 14, 2000.

REMARKS

Claims 15-21 and 23 are pending in this application. Claims 15-21 and 23 remain.

Claims 15-21 have been rejected under the judicially-created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 15-21 of U.S. Patent No. 5,795,487. Claims 15-21 and 23 have been rejected under the judicially-created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 15-21 of U.S. Patent No. 5,795,487 in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,558,503 (Goodenough et al.). A terminal disclaimer to obviate the double patenting rejection is filed herewith. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the obviousness-type double patenting rejection has been overcome.

Furthermore, Applicants' invention calls for the use of a stabilized aqueous alkali or alkaline earth metal hypobromite solution prepared by: (a) mixing an aqueous solution of an alkali or alkaline earth metal hypochlorite with a bromide ion source; (b) allowing the bromide ion source and the alkali or alkaline earth metal hypochlorite to react to form an unstabilized alkali or alkaline earth metal hypobromite solution; (c) adding a stabilizer selected from the group consisting of alkali metal sulfamate, carbonic acids, hydrogen cyanide, carboxylic acids, amino acids, sulfuric acids, phosphoric acids and boric acids to the unstabilized hypobromite solution; and (d) recovering a stabilized aqueous alkali or alkaline metal hypobromite solution. In contrast, U.S. Patent No.